

JUSPAX

Prepared by the Human Rights Task Force of the Diocesan International Justice and Peace Commission.

Internationally, the pervasive presence of American power creates a responsibility of using that power in the service of human rights. The link between our economic assistance and regimes which utilize torture, deny legal protection to citizens and detain political prisoners without due process clearly is a question of conscience for our government and for each of us as citizens in a democracy. (U.S. Catholic Conference: On the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Nov. 13, 1974)

Despite the fact that the past few administrations in Washington have voiced concern about the human rights of our allies in the world, perhaps no ally has continued for so long to deny basic human rights to its citizens than has the Republic of South Korea. Even today, as President Carter has eloquently stated our government's position on human rights, there has been little use of our influence in South Korea specifically to uphold our criteria of human rights in the formulation and execution of our foreign policy. Some small gestures have been aimed at impressing the Carter Administration. Recently, fourteen political prisoners, a Protestant clergyman, three Roman Catholic priests, and ten university students — were freed from prison on the 29th anniversary of the country's first republican constitution. (N.Y. Times, July 18, 1977). All were arrested and convicted for criticizing President Park Chung-Hee, but the decree under which they were convicted remains in effect.

In 1972 President Park, citing a threat of invasion from the North and subversion at home, proclaimed martial law and dissolved the National Assembly. He has since revised the constitution by fiat to ensure his indefinite continuance in office. One-third of the members of the National Assembly are selected by him. He has also muzzled the press and made criticism of his government a criminal offense punishable (and punished) in some instances by death. The House Subcommittee on International Organizations has amassed a great deal of evidence of repression from a variety of witnesses, including scholars, missionaries, and diplomats, who have had firsthand experience in Korea. The question is what will our government do to maintain its credibility in having human rights remain a priority in our foreign policy.

Our alternatives come basically down to three choices: first, continue our present policy; second, withdraw both our military and economic assistance completely and as soon as possible; and finally, continue our military and economic assistance but gradually diminish it unless President Park begins

to reinstate constitutional government which would protect and enforce human rights, as set forth in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which the Republic of South Korea has subscribed.

Each of these alternatives has its risks. Complete withdrawal could bring about a similar invasion from the North as occurred in South Vietnam. What would happen to our relations with Japan, who depends upon our strategic defenses in South Korea?

Gradual withdrawal brings with it a "wishy-washy" approach to a supposed guiding principle of our foreign policy. We run the risk of having it said we interfere in the internal affairs of other states, but we have done it before in Brazil, Chile and Portugal. But we make it more tolerable for President Park to begin to implement policies that are not characteristic of a dictatorship but of a civilized, democratic society where each person's worth and dignity are upheld.

To continue our present policy toward South Korea leaves us open to criticism of saying one thing and doing another. It makes us less credible as a democracy, and leaves doubts in the minds of people in our own country and around the world about our guiding principles.

The concerns of our foreign policy vis-a-vis South Korea should make us wonder what we as a people, who elect our government and pay for the governmental programs and policies that affect us and other people, are going to do about repression. Will we be heard or will we be quiet in the face of repression over there? Will we be the "silent majority" or will we be the prophets of hope and justice and peace to ourselves and others? Certainly we as a people must find effective ways to promote specific human rights concerns into our diplomacy, as we have learned to do with many other concrete but not strategic interests, such as our commercial (eg. steel), labor, agricultural and fisheries interests. What will we do now in the case of South Korea?

St. John's Schedules Fr. Bartlett

The week of Feb. 12 will be a special one at St. John the Evangelist Church on Humboldt Street as the parish begins a special program called Discovery '78.

The special guest speaker for the two opening nights will be Father Albert Bartlett, SJ, former rector of McQuaid Jesuit High School, who now serves as his society's vice-provincial in charge of formation. On both Sunday and Monday evenings, at 7:30, Father Bartlett will speak on "Exploring the Father's Love," and "Exploring Acceptance of His Love."

The program is open to the public.



Special Proclamation

On Jan. 23, Thomas Ryan, mayor of Rochester, proclaimed Catholic Schools Week which the diocese celebrated Jan. 29-Feb. 5. Seated from left are: Paula Berry, Corpus Christi; the Mayor; Aaron Punwoody, Corpus Christi. Standing: Cora Schultz, president of Nazareth's Student Council; Louis Tomassetti, president of Aquinas Institute's Student Council; Timothy Leahy, superintendent of schools and Mrs. Gina Ouweleen, president of the Rochester Federation of Catholic School Parents.

St. Augustine's Sets Lenten Programs

Several Lenten programs have been scheduled by the staff and committees of St. Augustine Church at 410 Chili Ave. in Rochester.

A course entitled "The Catholic Church Today" will give an overview of the Church as it approaches the 1980s. The five-part series will be taught by Father Daniel Karl and Timothy Sigrist and it will begin at 7

p.m., Wednesday, Feb. 15 to continue for the next four Wednesdays in the rectory.

Another program, "Our Spiritual Traditions," will explore six spiritual topics, Franciscan, Marian, Mystical, Charismatic, Monastic and Ignatian. Guest speakers will discuss the tradition and then lead a liturgical celebration

highlighting it. This series will take place at 7:30 p.m. in the church on Mondays, Feb. 13 through March 20.

And during March, a program called "Neighborhood Sharing Groups" will be initiated. A priority of the Religious Education Committee, the program will involve seven neighborhood areas in the 19th

and 20th Wards. From each area, according to the parish, a host household has offered to open their home at least once a month to the neighborhood. One of the ideas behind the program is to show that interdependence is important to survival.

Further information may be obtained by calling the rectory at 328-2442.

Parish Sets Lent Events

A number of events, to which the public has been invited are slated this year as part of St. Ambrose Church preparation for Easter.

Among those events are special penance services, stations of the cross special liturgies and an adult education series.

Beginning Thursday, Feb. 9, Jack Calareso, the parish director of religious education, will begin a series of classes on "The Book of Exodus — History of the Hebrews." These classes will begin at 1 p.m. in the office of religious education.

On Tuesday, Feb. 14, Father Gerald Appelby, diocesan director of the division of special ministries, will open a 5:30 p.m. series of special liturgies whose theme will be "Love: The Most Human Skill."

Lent Series Set at BS

The Blessed Sacrament Adult Education Committee has scheduled a Lenten series, to be conducted by Father Edward Golden and Sister Betty Rogers, RC.

Slated for Tuesday evenings, 7:30-9 p.m., beginning Feb. 14, the series will be held in the Church building. The evenings are divided into three parts: homily, group discussion and prayer.

Topics include Which Road Shall I Take?, Going to Jerusalem, Deserts and Springs, Walking in the Light and Walking with Life.

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